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Kernan Tours Veedersburg's MasterGuard; Announces Grant to Train 721 Workers

INDIANAPOLIS— Touring MasterGuard's Veedersburg facility, Lt. Governor Joe Kernan announced today that the company has been awarded \$71,500 from the Indiana Department of Commerce's Skills Enhancement Fund to train 721 existing employees.

Located in Fountain County, MasterGuard manufactures truck bumpers and running board assemblies for Ford, Toyota, GMC and Chevrolet products.

The company will use the Commerce grant to train employees following a \$1.51 million investment in new equipment. Employees will pick up skills in stamping, forklift and crane operation, conflict resolution and team building.

"MasterGuard is investing in its workforce at the same time it's investing in new technology, and that's a winning combination," said Kernan, who leads the state's economic development efforts. "Strong employee skills are key to the success of any business, and we're proud to support this company's training efforts."

Established in 1956 under the name Flex-N-Gate, the company began as a producer of stock racks for pickup trucks. Today, MasterGuard is owned by Illinois based Flex-N-Gate Corp., which operates 15 facilities throughout the United States, Mexico and Canada.

"MasterGuard, a division of Flex-N-Gate, wishes to thank the State of Indiana for their continuing support," said Roger McArdle, MasterGuard vice president and chief financial officer. "While technology is extremely important to maintaining a competitive advantage in today's global business world, the skills of employees are even more important. This grant from the State of Indiana will help us maintain and advance the skills of our team."

Commerce awards Skills Enhancement Fund grants to Indiana companies that undertake capital investment projects. The grants help defray the costs of training new and current employees in basic work skills and company-specific skills necessary to support the project. Companies interested in learning more about the Skills Enhancement Fund or other Commerce programs should contact the Business Development Division at 800.463.8081, or visit the Web Site at www.indianacommerce.com.